

I have had the opportunity, in 14 years on the Armed Services Committee, to meet a lot of our military men and women. I do not believe that they are so fragile that having a gay person serve next to them will kill them.

I rise today to express my strong support for the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010. The mission of our Armed Forces is to deter war and to prevent and to protect the security of our country. If a soldier is capable and willing to sacrifice his or her life to honorably serve this country, that soldier is truly defending this country.

If a gay soldier is capable and willing to fight for this country, that soldier, too, is protecting the security of this country. If that soldier is willing to fight for our country, but our government denies him or her the right because the soldier is gay, then it is not the gay soldier who puts our security at risk, but this government.